

BILL NYE IN LONDON

He and Clarence Are in Lodgings Over There.

PROPOSED VISIT TO WINDSOR

Clarence is His Man and is a Real Nice Man Too—Attending Divine Service at Westminster Abbey.

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LONDON, Oct. 14.
 Hay here is \$45 to \$50 per ton.
 Hay known of it would have brought some with me. In fact, as many are aware, baled hay is being shipped now to England from America in large quantities owing to the very dry summer and shortness of grass and straw here. But



CLARENCE POINTING OUT PLACES OF INTEREST.

If I could market my North Carolina grass every year at the above prices I could make enough to square me on the expense of trying to raise other crops.

The past week I have been the possessor of a valet. The doctor told me that I did not know how to travel or what to eat and drink in order to keep out of the grave, so he prescribed among other things a valet to travel with me, do chores, give my orders, attend to my washing and ironing and be general all around guide, philosopher and hired man. I call him Clarence. He is 38 years of age and resembles me very much in appearance. It is rather amusing to see me going about over England accompanied by a manservant resembling me so closely. Elsewhere it would cause laughter, but here it is kindly and even courteously received, but not mirthfully.

Clarence points out various places of interest to me in city or country as we jog along. He is not up on art very much, being a self made man who ran short of hair as he finished the job. But he knows this country by heart, and though his English is bad enough to import into America for the use of those who wish to affect the room of this country he is

a good servant and has an appetite that will out my visit here short by a week.

At present I am at lodgings. Everybody advises you to take lodgings here, and very likely it would be a good thing if we could always know what they were to be. Mine could be a good deal better, for the landlady "has seen better days." Perhaps I need not say any more than that.

However, it is a case where the husband joyfully died about 15 years ago and left his wife a landlady with a quiver in her voice and no idea of keeping house. You see such cases everywhere, but more here perhaps. More people connected by the eyelids with the Established Church die here or lose their jobs and leave witless relatives to cling to worldly people who are on salaries than elsewhere perhaps.

I am sensitive to the cold, and England is cold. People who are used to it, of course, do not mind it, but to dwell with this never dying chill at one's heart, surrounded by a pall of shivers and darkness, and darkness such as today pervades my room, and confronted by such a fire as I have, is the kind of thing that makes one beg for death or an early steamer.

My fire is made in an iron stove just big enough to hold a black brick. This brick is coal dust and dirt mixed with tar or New Orleans molasses or something and then compressed. It is as incombustible as a Belgian block, and when in its wild fury it turns red and is really in its meridian it is as fiercely hot as a new laid egg.

I ask Clarence to stir it up, but he well asks how one can stir a brick that is wedged in the chimney. I put on more overcoats and sit on my feet. They are so chilled that I am most afraid I will take cold sitting on them.

Last Sabbath I attended divine service at Westminster abbey and wore my new clothes made here. There was a slight flutter of pleasure, I fancied, as I passed down the aisle. The clothes are not so loud as some that I was tempted to get. What I wore was a subdued sort of protested check made in a box plait jacket, with hat of same, trousers half tight fitting—i. e., tight below the knee and very full above—plaid tennis shoes and white "spats."

Westminster abbey has a good choir of singers, who live here in town, and an organ that is paid for. The voice of that organ was very comforting to me, a stranger with sweet memories only for company, and on its velvet mantle of melody my heart rose. I believe in an honest but voiceless prayer.

The service was swallowed up by the mighty galleries, where, in the dusky recesses of the lofty building, the gold and ruby and green sunbeams from the vast and glorious window were straying, but the voices of the singers and the bugles and thunder and flutes of the organ I could not forget.

They were not the same, but they took me back to the time when I used to go and wait all through choir practice in order to go home at last with the young lady organist.

It was so grand, so deep, so memory stirring, that for the moment I forgot my costly raiment and was back again in the far west of America, without over-garters, it is true, but with a heart full of joy and with a small gloved hand on my coat sleeve, where I can feel it yet.

So I went after services to tell the pastor how much I was pleased with his choir, etc., but he was gone.

Westminster church is where the queen was crowned fifty odd years ago and has never since its erection or consecration given a smash and mill accident.

Yesterday I visited the National gallery because it was the day when artists come to make copies of the old masters. There you see old and gray or "ste pegging away at copies of Rubens, and young and pretty girl artists—prettier than any of the pictures they are painting—and all at work regardless of passing and curious people. They are all wrapped up in their art.

I watched one young lady over her shoulder while she painted a sunset—sort of an explosion it looked like—in the Turner collection. Then I asked her what price she was going to put on it, but she called an attendant, who arrested me and confined me in the Hogarth room for half an hour.

They are very severe with people who interfere with artists who are working.

The works of Turner have been often criticized, and especially by the unlearned. Artists never speak severely of him, but common people do. For my own part, I do not care for him. Possibly that is because I am unprepared to judge, but I am not afraid to stand up here today with my hand on my heart and say that, if you will give me a good, clean tablecloth and move it around a little each meal so that the place where I carve will come on a new spot each time, I'll give you in a week's time a Turner that by touching up a little will make people pop their eyes out.

Speaking of the Hogarth collection, I will say en passant that it was the only room in which no artists were copying. While all the other masters had students and venerable artists clustered about them, Hogarth's disorderly house was still.

His portrait of himself, by himself, hung where it faced his "Marriage à la Mode" on the opposite wall, and he seemed to say to himself sadly, "Did I devote my inspired brush to such work as that and hope to be loved or copied in coming years?"

Comparatively few Americans are here this year the tradesmen say and account for it on the ground that they are staying at home to visit the great fair, or, as I heard a poetic kind of man say once, "The White City."

But I couldn't tell at a glance whether there were a few more or less here of any kind of people in London than there had been. One or two might be snatched away by death before night, and tomorrow I would not know it. But after I had been here, of course, for a week or two it would be different.

A Frenchman here last week got a frightful and ghastly blow on the head and is still lying at the police hospital unconscious—possibly dying.

The circumstance occurred in this way: He and I were talking about thieves, etc., and he showed me a guard which he wore on his watch. It seemed very ingenious, and I was quite struck with it.

"You like it?" said he.

"Yes, very much."

"Verra well, you shall have eet." And he took it off, and before I could say Jack Robinson he had it on my watch. I thanked him very profusely and in a way that would have made old man

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Chesterfield go and jump off the dock. "Don't mention it, sure," he said. "It is not necessary. I have just returned from America. I need so dam sing no longars."

If I run across anything of interest or anything new comes to town, I will draw it off in a letter next week or the week



IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY.
 after. I am going to sort of look around here some more on the sub rosa, q. t., in cog., or on the dead, as Spencer would say, and jot down things here and there, after which I am going back to Cork and other towns.

Tomorrow I go to Windsor castle to stay a couple of days. Her majesty is not at home.

Bill Nye

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